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File Photo

LAND-FOR-JOBS SCAM: NO SC RELIEF FOR LALU

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to stay the trial court proceedings against RJD supremo and former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav in the CBI's land-for-jobs case. A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh asked the Delhi High Court to expedite hearing on his plea for quashing of the CBI FIR. The top court also granted exemption from appearance to Yadav before the trial court in the case noting his health condition | **P11**

OUTFIT BEHIND PAHALGAM MASSACRE PROSCRIBED AMIDST TRADE TALKS; E.U. GOES FOR ROSNEFT JUGULAR

US puts LeT proxy TRF on its terror list

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

IN a significant development in counter-terror cooperation, the United States formally designated The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). The announcement came amid intense India-US trade talks to arrive at a deal ahead of the August 1 deadline to avoid reciprocal tariffs announced by President Donald Trump.

The decision was announced by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio less than three months after a brutal April 22 terror attack in J&K's Pahalgam, in which 26 civilians were killed. The massacre marked the deadliest assault on Indian civilians since the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

"Today's designations send a clear message: The US stands firmly against terrorism in all forms," said Rubio. "We are committed to holding perpetrators and their sponsors accountable, wherever they may be."

TRF had initially claimed responsibility for the Pahalgam carnage but later withdrew the statement at Pakistan's bidding. Probe by the National Investigation Agency identified TRF commander Sheikh Sajjad Gul as the architect of the attack.

The US move is expected to add new pressure on Pakistan, long accused by India of harbouring, fostering and enabling anti-India terrorist networks. According to US intelligence and Indian counter-terrorism officials, TRF has been involved in a string of deadly ambushes against Indian security forces throughout 2024, indicating a pattern of coordinated proxy violence.

To hurt Russia, EU sanctions Guj refinery

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

IN a bid to ratchet up economic pressure on Russia over the Ukraine war, the European Union on Friday unveiled a fresh package of sanctions, including lowering the price cap on Russian crude oil and sanctioning Nayara Energy, an India-based refinery with links to Russian energy giant Rosneft. Nayara Energy, formerly known as Essar Oil, operates a 20-million-tonne-per-year refinery in Vadinar, Gujarat, and manages some 6,750 petrol pumps across India. Rosneft has a 49.13% stake in the firm. With sanctions, Nayara will no longer be able to export refined products such as petrol and diesel to European countries.

"For the first time, we are designating a flag registry and the biggest Rosneft refinery in India," said Kaja Kallas, the EU's foreign policy chief.

In 2022, the G7 nations introduced a $60-a-barrel price cap on Russian oil sold to third countries. The EU is now pushing for a lower cap of $47.60 per barrel, closer to current market prices. Under the price cap mechanism, Western insurance and shipping services can only be used if Russian oil is sold below the capped price.

The EU's latest move is aimed at reducing Moscow's war revenues and comes amid growing concern that Russia continues to earn significant revenue from its oil exports, despite existing sanctions.

Ironically, a lower price cap may benefit countries like India and China, which have significantly increased their imports of Russian crude, as they stand to get Russian crude at lower prices.

AG: Best if nurse's kin are part of negotiation

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

ATTORNEY General R Venkataramani on Friday told the Supreme Court that it would be best if only family members of Kerala nurse Nimisha Priya were involved in discussions with the victim's family in Yemen to seek pardon.

"Only the family of Nimisha Priya should talk with the victim's relatives and intervention by any other organisation would unlikely be fruitful," Venkataramani told a two-judge bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta.

Nimisha Priya

The bench was informed that Priya's execution had been stayed. Highlighting that the government wants her to come back safely, the A-G submitted that the government was doing its duty at each and every step.

Counsel appearing for the petitioner organisation, Save Nimisha Priya International Action Council (SNPIAC), which is extending legal support to Priya, had sought a Centre-appointed delegation to go to Yemen to meet the victim's family for negotiation. The bench said the petitioner could approach the government with the proposal.

Senior lawyer R Basant, appearing for the petitioner, said, "First, the family has to forgive us. After that, the discussion on blood money will come into the picture." Basant requested the court that a delegation of SNPIAC and a representative of Sunni cleric Kanthapuram A P Aboobacker Musaliyar, who has contacts in Yemen, should be sent for talks.

The court, however, did not pass any order and fixed the matter for further hearing on August 14.

Email bomb threat to 40 Bengaluru schools, warns of mental health issues

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

NEARLY 40 schools across Bengaluru received threat mails, warning of bomb attacks early Friday morning. The threat mail was reportedly sent around 7:31 am. A single mail is said to have been sent to all the schools, from an email id: roadkill333@atomicmail.io with the subject 'bombs inside the school'.

The accused, identifying himself as 'roadkill', said in the mail: "Hello. I am writing to let you know that I have placed explosive devices (trinitrotoluene) within school classrooms. The explosives were skilfully hidden in plastic bags. You all deserve this. You deserve to suffer just like me. I will erase the last one of you from this world. Not a single soul will survive. I gladly laugh when I watch the news. I truly hate my life. I was never truly helped. Psychiatrists, psychologists, no one has ever cared, and no one will ever care. You only care about medicating helpless and clueless humans. Psychiatrists never tell you that those meds ruin your organs or that they cause disgusting weight gain. People are brainwashed into believing psychiatric medications can help but they don't."

Parents pick up their children from St Germain Academy in Bengaluru on Friday

Private schools in West, Central and South divisions received more threat mails. The sender also asked that the email be shared with the media. **P3**

EXPRESS READ

Dharmasthala: CM says not against SIT probe

Mysuru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday said the state government was not opposed to the demand for setting up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the alleged rape, murder and mass burial of several women at Dharmasthala in Dakshina Kannada. He said the government will take a call on setting up the SIT based on the police investigation report | **P4**

ED arrests Baghel's son in liquor scam case

Raipur: The Enforcement Directorate on Friday arrested Chaitanya Baghel, son of senior Congress leader and former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel, in an alleged liquor scam-linked money laundering case. Chaitanya was later sent to five-day ED remand by a court. Bhupesh Baghel alleged that central agencies were being misused to target opposition leaders | **P12**

Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

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